

Impeachment of Richard M. Helms as Ambassador to Iran:

Statement Accompanying Introduction of a Congressional Resolution —

Part 2

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Washington, D.C.

(Continued from "People and the PURSUIT of Truth" for January 1976, page 4.)

Is Ambassador Helms Subject to Impeachment for Offenses Committed During His Tenure at the CIA

The essential thrust of impeachment is not punishment, but removal from public office. Impeachment also brings under the Constitution the "disqualification to hold and enjoy any office under the United States."

Neither the Constitution itself nor the logic of impeachment requires that the demonstration of unfitness occur during tenure in the same office from which removal is sought. In the case of the impeachment in 1912 of Judge Robert W. Archbald, the U.S. House of Representatives adopted 13 articles of impeachment, 6 of which referred to abuses committed by Archbald in a prior judicial position on a lower court. The Senate voted to convict Archbald, sustaining at least one of the charges dealing in part with offenses in his prior office. It may be, as will be noted later, that in addition to offenses committed by Mr. Helms while serving as Director of the CIA, he may also have committed an offense of an impeachable character in possible perjury during the hearings on his confirmation as Ambassador to Iran.

Although there is no direct precedent for the impeachment of an ambassador, Mr. Helms is clearly subject to impeachment as a civil officer within the meaning of the Constitution. I have received a written confirmation of that interpretation from the American Law Division of the Library of Congress.

Offenses of Mr. Helms That Could be Impeachable

In the following material I do not in any way state or imply that Mr. Richard Helms is guilty of any of the offenses suggested. It is contended merely that Mr. Helms has the duty of explaining his conduct and his statements and that, in the absence of any believable explanation, the House of Representatives has the right and duty to investigate the conduct of Mr. Helms during the years when he was the director of the CIA to determine whether impeachable offenses have been committed.

I will set forth very briefly some of the salient facts about first, operation CHAOS; second, Mr. Helms' involvement in the politics of Chile; and third, Mr. Helms' conduct in response to White House Watergate requests.

Operation Chaos

The Rockefeller Commission Report on CIA activities within the United States makes clear the horrifying details of an operation initiated by Mr.

Helms in August 1967 designed to collect information on foreign contacts with American dissidents. This is an operation which in some 5 years collected documents which include the names of more than 300,000 persons and organizations.

This unit, entitled "Operation CHAOS," prepared 3,000 memorandums for dissemination to the FBI, did extensive surveillance on the peace movements and furnished 26 reports to the Kerner Commission, some of which related almost exclusively to domestic dissident activities.

From even 20 pages on Operation CHAOS in the Rockefeller Report on the CIA it seems clear that Richard Helms was induced into this activity by Presidential pressure. On November 15, 1967, for example, Helms delivered personally to President Johnson the CIA study on the U.S. peace movement requested by the President. Although the studies of the CIA showed that there was virtually no evidence of foreign involvement and no evidence of any foreign financial support for the peace activities within the United States, Mr. Helms continued to do surveillance on those who protested the war.

On February 18, 1969, Mr. Helms confessed in a note to Henry Kissinger, then assistant to President Nixon, the illegalities of the CIA of which he was the director. His memo to Dr. Kissinger noted that the CIA-prepared document "Restless Youth" included a section on American students. Mr. Helms said bluntly:

This is an area not within the charter of this agency, so I need not emphasize how extremely sensitive this makes the paper.

Improper and Beyond Powers

The excessive secrecy surrounding Operation CHAOS and its isolation within the CIA demonstrate once again that Director Helms knew that it was improper and beyond the scope of the authorized powers of the CIA.

The Rockefeller Report notes the growing opposition of CIA employees and officials toward Operation CHAOS. Although the Rockefeller Report soft-pedals the internal dissension over Operation CHAOS, it quotes an internal memo of Director Helms on December 5, 1972 in which he insisted that Operation CHAOS "cannot be stopped simply because some members of the organization do not like this activity."

Operation CHAOS which ultimately had a staff of 52, was directly under the supervision of Mr. Helms. There is no way in which he can claim that his subordinates operated this unit without his knowledge and

consent. The abuses of power and the countless violations of privacy of American citizens might well be impeachable offenses imputable to Mr. Richard Helms. An impeachment inquiry is the only available method by which Mr. Helms can be made accountable for a long series of intrusions into the lives of American citizens.

Opening First Class Mail of Americans

Equally damaging to the privacy of American citizens was the CIA program to open first class mail. Mr. Helms might well have known from the very beginning about these programs which ran from 1953 to 1973. They were possibly the largest and most clearly illegal programs conducted by the CIA. Certainly this mail-tampering operation was under the direct control and supervision of Mr. Helms during the seven years he served as Director of the agency. In addition, it appears that Richard Helms deliberately deceived postal authorities into thinking that the operation was limited to the copying of information off envelopes.

Mr. Helms' Involvement in Chile

About the only evidence that has emerged in the recent past indicating that the CIA might make its employees accountable to the law was the revelation in July 1975 that the CIA last year informed the Justice Department that Richard Helms might have committed perjury in testimony before a Senate Committee. In the testimony at issue Mr. Helms told the Senate Committee that the CIA had played a limited role in undermining the Allende government in Chile.

A conversation occurred during the confirmation proceedings of Mr. Helms in the U.S. Senate on February 7, 1973. The dialog was as follows:

Senator Symington. Did you try in the Central Intelligence Agency to overthrow the government of Chile?

Mr. Helms. No, Sir.

Senator Symington. Did you have any money passed to the opponents of Allende?

Mr. Helms. No, Sir.

Senator Symington. So the stories you were involved in that war are wrong?

Mr. Helms. Yes, Sir. I said to Senator Fulbright many months ago that if the agency had really gotten in behind the other candidates and spent a lot of money and so forth the election might have come out differently.

\$ 8 Million to Subvert Allende's Government

Mr. Helms undoubtedly knew about the covert \$8 million campaign conducted by the CIA to bring about Dr. Allende's downfall.

The foregoing conversation might or might not be perjury. Reading the entire transcript of the three days of hearings on the ambassadorship of Mr. Helms, it is difficult, however, to conclude that one is reading "the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

A report in the New York Times of July 27, 1965, claims that Richard Helms, while Director of the CIA, prepared a memorandum in the fall of 1970 informing Henry Kissinger and Attorney General John

Mitchell that the agency had supplied machineguns and tear gas grenades to men plotting to overthrow the Chilean Government.

If the Department of Justice ever did in fact bring perjury or other proceedings against Richard Helms, the officials of the CIA would undoubtedly claim that reasons of national security preclude their giving to the Government for its prosecution or to Mr. Helms for his defense a good deal of evidence which would be indispensable for a trial. That particular excuse is not likely to have much effect or force in an impeachment inquiry, as a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court decision made clear in a case involving Richard Nixon.

Mr. Helms and the Post-Watergate White House

On February 1, 1975, the hearings on the alleged involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Watergate and Ellsberg matters were declassified and published. These hearings conducted before the Special Subcommittee on Intelligence of the House Committee on Armed Services demonstrate that Richard Helms in the first 6 weeks after the Watergate break-in on June 17, 1972, apparently ordered a high official of the Agency to withhold Watergate information and to deny the Justice Department access to a key witness. I am not stating categorically that the 1,131 pages of those hearings demonstrate that Mr. Helms committed impeachable offenses.

But the evidence that is available here and elsewhere clearly suggests that Mr. Helms was all too ready to subvert the purpose of the CIA for the objectives sought by personnel of the White House.

Other Potential Offenses

During the years in which Mr. Helms was the Chief Executive Officer of the CIA, that agency has been accused of conducting break-ins and wiretaps in the United States without a warrant, using local police credentials to gather information on anti-war groups, supplying surveillance to local police, using local police to conduct a break-in, contributing \$38,635.58 to the White House in 1970 to defray the cost of replying to people who wrote to President Nixon following the Cambodian invasion, and administering powerful drugs to unsuspecting individuals. I make no conclusion here as to the truth of these accusations or the extent to which Mr. Helms should be held accountable for these activities, but clearly Mr. Helms should be given the opportunity to vindicate himself if that is possible. It seems more and more clear to me that an impeachment inquiry is the only way that the American people can obtain the full truth and judge whether Richard Helms is fit to serve in a position of high public trust.

The Right of the American People to Know

The American people have a right to know about those deeds of Mr. Helms in the years 1966 to 1973 which may have violated the fundamental principles by which Americans live together as a people. Mr. Helms also has the right to a forum where he can vindicate himself against all of the accusations which day after day continue to increase and multiply. An impeachment inquiry is the only instrumentality which the American Government has to bring out the truth of this dark era in American history.

The American people have a right to know whether Richard Helms is a worthy representative of the people of this country in Iran. The American people have the right to know whether the CIA, under his

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William Colby admitted that CIA operatives are currently serving as journalists for news organizations abroad, and that "detailmen" are assigned abroad to news organizations, often without the knowledge of management. Ronald Dellums, California Representative, asked Colby in an open session of a House hearing if the CIA had ever asked a network to kill a news story. Colby would not answer specifics in open session, so the panel went immediately behind closed doors to grill him for several hours.

Conclusions

It is to be hoped that all committees in the House and Senate will investigate the Secret Team members in the 15 media organizations and their influence and control over editorial policies on domestic assassination conspiracies. It is also to be hoped that the committees will investigate the role of our current president, Gerald Ford, and his working relationship to various CIA people in the original cover-up of the John F. Kennedy assassination conspiracy. Certainly, David Belin's relationship to the CIA and to President Ford in the present media cover-up campaign need to be investigated.

Fletcher Prouty claims in his November, 1975 article in Gallery magazine titled "The Fourth Force" /20/ that Belin is a CIA operative. Prouty says, "The Rockefeller Commission did not look into this (the Fourth Force-CIA) because it had been penetrated on behalf of the CIA by David Belin, its chief counsel and former counsel of the Warren Commission. In fact, Belin still reports to the CIA." If this is indeed true, it explains every move Belin has made since 1964 and also explains his mysterious way of appearing and reappearing on the front pages and editorial pages of various major newspapers, and on choice television shows, and on the Rockefeller Commission.

If the Congress leaves untouched this most important problem, perhaps more serious than any of the other problems raised by the assassination conspiracies and their cover-ups, the United States may, in fact, be headed for the real 1984.

Notes and References

1. Statistic from a Cambridge Research poll taken in October, 1975.
2. The 15 organizations are: CBS, NBC, ABC (television and radio), AP, UPI, Business Week-McGraw Hill, Washington Post-Newsweek and their news service, U.S. News and World Report, New York Times and its news service, Metromedia Network, Time Inc., Westinghouse Radio News Network, Capital City Broadcasting Radio Network, Public Broadcasting TV Network, and North American Newspaper Alliance.
3. Sprague, Richard E., "The American News Media and the Assassination of President Kennedy", "Computers and Automation", June-July, 1973.
4. Prouty, L. Fletcher, "The Secret Team", Prentice Hall, 1974.
5. Policoff, Jerry, "The Media and the Murder of John Kennedy", "New Times", October 1975.
6. "Who Killed JFK? Just One Assassin", "Time" magazine, November 24, 1975.
7. "Up Front — Did One Man With One Gun Kill John F. Kennedy? Eight Skeptics Who Say No", "People", November 3, 1975.
8. Author's discussion with Jerry Policoff, November 29, 1975.
9. "Warren Panel Aide Calls for 2nd Inquiry Into Kennedy Killing", "New York Times", November 23, 1975, p. 1.

- 9A. Transcript of Gerald Ford, Press Conference, "New York Times", November 27, 1975.
10. For a summary of the evidence and a scenario about what it shows, the reader is referred to two articles in "People and the Pursuit of Truth"; "The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: the Involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency in the Plans and the Cover-Up", May, 1975, and "Who Killed JFK?", October, 1975. Both by the author.
11. Phelan, James R., "The Assassination", "New York Times Magazine Section", November 23, 1975.
12. Thurston, Samuel F. (Pseudonym for Richard E. Sprague), "The Central Intelligence Agency and The New York Times", "Computers and Automation", July, 1971.
13. Based on a discussion among the author, Dan Rather, and Robert Richter at CBS in Washington, D.C., approximately ten days before the first Cronkite-CBS section of the 1967 four-part series on the JFK assassination.
14. O'Conner, John J., "TV: CBS News is Presenting Two Hour-Long Programs on the Assassination of President Kennedy", "New York Times", November 24, 1975.
15. "Dallas: New Questions and Answers", "Newsweek", April 28, 1975.
16. Schonfeld, Maurice W., "The Shadow of a Gunman", "Columbia Journalism Review", July-August, 1975.
17. "Conspiracy Fever," Jacob Cohen, "Commentary," October 1975.
18. "Saturday Evening Post", September, October, November and December, 1975 issues.
19. "D.C. Digs Deep Into TV News Ties With CIA", "Variety", November 12, 1975.
20. Prouty, L. Fletcher, "The Fourth Force", "Galaxy", November, 1975. ☐

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direction, engaged in a pattern of deception, law-breaking, and abuse of power. Because neither the CIA nor the Justice Department has done anything to vindicate the rights of the American people in this respect, the Congress, with regret and reluctance, must initiate impeachment proceedings against Richard M. Helms. ☐

"The Assassination Papers, Vol. 1" — Notice

In the September 1975 issue of "People and the PURSUIT of Truth," we said: Many of our subscribers have asked that a selection of important articles published 1970-1975 in "Computers and Automation" and "Computers and People" dealing with political assassination be assembled into a book and reprinted together. We asked for votes on the proposition. More than 70 votes were received. Almost all of them said, "yes," emphatically. A great many of the voters pledged to buy two copies in advance of publication, at \$4.75 a copy.

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